

# Communications Activities: Virginia Turning Point Initiative



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# Current Status

## ■ Virginia Department of Health

- No coordinated activity for internal or external communications - “fragmented system”
- Breadth and complexity of program and services with no tangible unifying theme

## ■ Private Sector has taken the initiative

- Not necessarily bad; however, VDH needs to be seen as an effective provide of information



# What Turning Point Learned

## ■ Telephone Survey

- 35% of respondents could not name a service provided by their local health department
- Of those that could “immunizations” were the most frequently reported response



# What Turning Point Learned

## ■ Focus Groups

- Education about ways to promote healthy behaviors should be the top priority for public health
- Community leaders believe that in order to improve health status, individuals need information to make better decisions about their health



# Building on Lessons Learned

- Outreach Activities
- Keys to Healthy Communities
- Web Page
- Interim Report
- Promotional Piece
- E-mail updates
- Legislator's Guide to Public Health



# Building on Lessons Learned

- Agency leadership values communication
- Close nexus between Turning Point and VDH current biennium strategic plan
  - Workforce Development
  - Possible Healthy Community Awards
- Reports have increased awareness of Turning Point among elected officials and the private sector



## Conclusion

- Communications capacity is essential
- VDH wants to develop that capacity (i.e. implementation strategy)
- Effective tools are critical for message success
- Partners expect public health to provide health information